

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Research Background**

Maintenance of a building can be defined as a process of reservation and restoration activity of the structures and the components in the building. This process should cover the whole building structures including toilets, rooms, walls, roofs, drains, doors, windows, floors and the fix furniture. The progress of a building maintenance is a universal issue and usually it is highly considered from the early process of the project construction or in the design phase to assure the quality of the building .

To be specific, school buildings are one of the most important facilities in our residence which functioning as the centre of excellence for getting basic knowledge in everyday life. The process of maintaining the school buildings also necessitate in serving staffs and all students well-being. The effectiveness of school maintenance protects capital investment and significantly it ensures the health and safety of the children and supports educational performance.

Nevertheless, in the year of 2007, there are many cases reported which involved the failures of the building components of Malaysian school. Furthermore, there is another case reported on 14 April 2008 where there was some roofs collapsed at Wakaf Tapai Secondary School in Kuala Terengganu. Unfortunately, on November 2008, the same case occur in SRJK (C) Han Ming, Puchong, Selangor due to the failure of roof trusses which was attacked by termites.

Leads to the efforts to sustain the effective implementation of property management in Malaysia, the need to study the problems that hinder the execution

should be considered as of paramount importance. Some of the problems previously identified which involve the lack of information (Zailan, 2001), human resource (Gibler and Black, 2004) and unclear objectives (Shahir, 2007). Therefore, as to complete a brief description with new findings and solutions, the study on the effectiveness of the public schools' maintenance process should be conducted comprehensively.

The paper begins with a literature review that focusing on public property management techniques and experiences in other countries and from other research. It is then followed by a section detailing the methodology selected for the study. Pursuing this further, a discussion of the findings will be presented before the paper provides a conclusion which is derived from the research.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Discovered from the literature review of some research, many problems had occurred at the implementation stage especially in public schools building. In our country, Malaysia, the management of government property and assets including buildings and the land management is considered as fairly low and under-performed (Syamilah, 2005). Compared to more developed countries like Australia, Japan and America, Malaysia can be categorized as less competent. In addition, the management aspects specifically for public school buildings in Malaysia, were virtually unattended to and almost ignored completely according to Syamilah (2005).

Leads to the serious effects, media reports have also highlighted a lot of issues caused by the poor management of government buildings maintenance. Some cases have led to the collapsed of ceilings, vacant buildings and surprisingly there are incidences of fire in school buildings. Results from those media reports, it can be seen obviously that there are barriers and a lot of difficulties faced by Malaysian government agencies to effectively implementing property asset management practices. In view of these serious problems, 'National Facility and Asset Management' conference have been conducted by the government as an optimistic step towards improving this poor management of government buildings as well as to adopt and integrate the effective

management practices specifically in managing, operating and maintaining a good performance of services.

According to Mohd et al. (2009), it is found that one of the main problems that cause default in the implementation of an effective property asset management is the absence of competent staff within specific knowledge areas and work units. Indeed, the finding of this problem statement was first to be found by Gibler and Black (2004) and specifically in public school administration as noted by Syamilah (2005). Results in other consequential problems, this issue also affect by the failure to employ the staffs equipped with special expertise within the property asset management field at public schools (Mohd et al., 2009). Moreover, this issue is comparable to the notion put forth by Syamilah (2005) who point up that the responsibility to manage the property assets in public schools including all buildings maintenance works definitely should be carried out by personnel or staffs equipped with relevant and related academic qualifications.

Other than that, Shahril (2004) states that another major problem faced in managing the property assets especially at the public school level are insufficient financial resources. To emphasize, this challenge becomes a critical impact in the efforts to manage the property assets effectively as Abdul Hamid (2002) figured out that financial resources act as one of significant keys in determining the success of an operation. According to Martindale (1999) who shared the same idea, he continued that the factor which lack of financial resources creates unwanted pressure within organisations as they strive in order to develop a better maintenance management using that scarce resource. As a prove to this issue, it have been reported on the news by “Berita Harian” on 5 August 2016, which entitled “ Syor sekolah cari dana sendiri disokong “ , refer to the appendix 1. It is stated that the recommendation of schools finding its own funds were supported.

In addition, the other problem which negatively affects the implementation of property asset management in the academic institutions specifically in the schools’ buildings is the lack of effective communication. It has been discovered by Mohd et al. (2009) that the communication failure exists in Malaysia mainly due to the very structure of our public governance as there are a lot of departments and ministries